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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE STUDY CENTER

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WASHINGTON, D. C. 20034

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October 23, 1978

Mr. John Coakley, Executive Director  
Association of Former Intelligence  
Officers  
6723 Whittier Avenue, Suite 303A  
McLean, Virginia 22101

Dear Jack:

I am writing this letter to advise you of the establishment of the National Intelligence Study Center (NISC), a nonprofit educational organization to study the role and use of intelligence in our national life, historically and in the future. Located in Washington, D.C., the Center will assist and encourage more comprehensive and objective examination of intelligence activities and organizations in the United States, that is, in an open society subject to Congressional oversight and the scrutiny of the most numerous and aggressive news media in the world.

One of the principal purposes of the Center is to encourage more widespread discussion of intelligence activities, and their implications and importance, by national educational, professional, and membership organizations. Another is to assist researchers and media professionals in studying intelligence-related matters in the context of other fields of research. Examples of projects NISC hopes to sponsor are described in an enclosed reprint from a recent article published in the journal of a major national organization, the Reserve Officers Association of the United States. One of the activities, awarding prizes for writings on intelligence and national decision-making, is described in a brief statement by NISC, also enclosed.

We hope you will make the existence of the Center known to your membership and that you will give the widest possible publicity to the awards and the Center's other existing and proposed activities. For example, one of the services which NISC hopes over time to perform is assisting national organizations that are planning discussions of intelligence-related matters in conferences or meetings. To cite still another example, in developing our oral-history project, we hope to draw upon suggestions from members of interested professional, learned, veterans and other organizations.

Martin Cramer, our Executive Director, or one of our other associates, will be following up on this letter to see how the mutual interests of your organization and NISC can best be served through meetings, exchange of publications, or other activities.

For your information, I am enclosing a brief biographical sheet on my own career, which makes evident my concern with the problems NISC proposes to deal with. Your advice and assistance in our early devopmental stage will be especially welcome and appreciated. We look forward to continuing cooperation and communication between the Center and the Association of Former Intelligence Officers.

Sincerely,

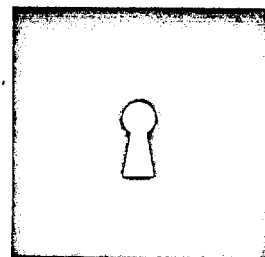
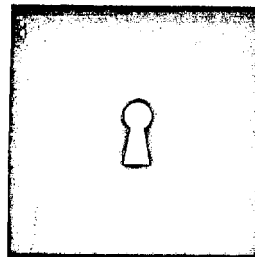
A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ray", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ray S. Cline  
President

Encs. 3

## NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE STUDY CENTER

# Toward Better Understanding



**T**he National Intelligence Study Center—a new educational nonprofit organization for the study of American national intelligence—has been established in the nation's capital.

American intelligence agencies have been for several years under intense criticism, some of it warranted, much of it unwarranted. In a democracy all agencies, including those which depend on secrecy, can expect public criticism and can, on occasion, be improved by it. Certainly U.S. intelligence agencies must operate within the constitutional and legal framework of our society.

Every society nevertheless needs to be able to reach decisions about its own security and the safety of its population on the basis of reliable information which other, often hostile, governments sometimes try to keep hidden. The U.S. intelligence system is fundamentally an organization and a process for collecting this hard-to-get information, analyzing it and providing it to policymakers.

The intensive public discussion of the operations of intelligence agencies has pointed up areas where restraining guidelines are needed to prevent intelligence operations from crossing over into areas incompatible with individual liberties in a free society. It also suggests, however, that there are opportunities for improving the effectiveness of intelligence collection and analysis and their value to national decision-making. It clearly indicates that there is confusion which needs clearing up concerning the limited but sometimes essential role of espionage and the propriety of covert political actions. Above all, it has been amply demonstrated that American citizens need a better understanding of just what our intelligence agencies do, what they cannot or should not do, what the system of political control and accountability is, and the essential contribution that intelligence must make to national decision-making, to defense, to arms control and to the maintenance of international peace.

This task must be undertaken not only by the government but also by private citizens who have a clear conviction of the importance of good intelligence to sound policy in a dangerous world. A better understanding of intelligence is needed at two levels, among those engaged in the formulation and implementation of government policy as well as among opinion leaders in academia, business and government, and among the general public. It is urgent, also, that the scholarly component of intelligence analysis be recognized as a function in our democratic political process as vital as or even more vital than the aspects of intelligence usually thought of as "cloak and dagger" activity.

The National Intelligence Study Center will act as a catalyst in encouraging the writing and public distribution of some serious books on intelligence and over time, bringing about expanded media coverage of a sounder analytical and less sensational kind than is now the rule. The hope of the Center is to help give the intelligence activities required by U.S. national interests the widespread understanding and support they require by explaining their place in the process of government and national security. The conduct of intelligence activities in a democracy, very mindful of the civil liberties of its people, is a difficult and complicated task. The Center will help scholars, writers and educators to understand and to describe that task and its proper limits for the benefit of everyone.

Interpreting to the general public the character of intelligence activity and its significance is a task which calls not only for substantive study but also for further research into how written material, film, lectures, exhibits and other educational techniques can be most effectively employed to do the necessary educational job.

As a first step the research Center will bring together people concerned with this problem who are capable of enlightening our citizenry about intelligence. There are hundreds, even thousands, of responsible citizens in this country who have worked in some part of our intelligence system over the past 35 years, during which U.S. worldwide responsibilities and commitments caused its extraordinary development into a major function of government. This Study Center would collect the necessary information and carry on a modest program of intellectual cross-fertilization among interested scholars and public-spirited citizens. The primary aim would be to put intelligence in its proper perspective and begin to lay the basis for the broader job of public education while exploring ways to accomplish it.

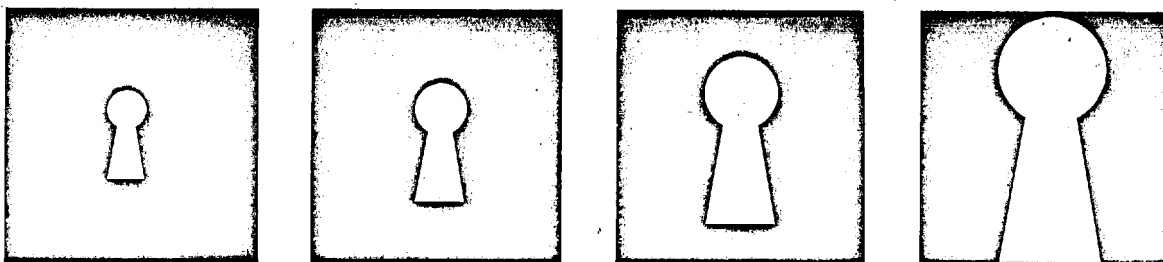
The National Intelligence Study Center will engage in activities along the following lines:

#### Educational Services for Individuals:

- Maintain a reading and working room for scholars visiting Washington to do research in the National Archives, the Library of Congress and elsewhere on subjects of interest to the Center.

- Carry on a correspondence with researchers working in this field so as to have a selected working bibliography as well as a catalogue of available expertise and work-in progress.

- Publish a newsletter digest of the results of meetings



dealing with intelligence matters; distribute studies, articles and book reviews; comment on organizational activities of interest to students of intelligence and national decision-making in the U.S.; and provide information and services to organizations and to individual citizens—to the extent Study Center staff permits.

- Work with other interested organizations, establishing a lecture series on intelligence and national decision-making in a democracy and related subjects. Examples might include: the history of covert intelligence collection and other covert activities, e.g., intelligence in the American Revolution; military intelligence; legislative oversight of intelligence activities; media treatment of intelligence activities; counter-intelligence in a democracy; judicial treatment of intelligence activities; presidential oversight of intelligence activities; and information and misinformation on espionage in books and movies.

- Conduct an oral history project on intelligence which will draw upon interviews with historians, other researchers, and former professionals in intelligence work.

- Develop a program for summer interns to assist with research on intelligence and national decision-making and other Center activities.

- Collect memorabilia and artifacts related to the history of intelligence and various techniques in intelligence work that are a matter of public record.

#### Projects Relating to National Organizations:

- Cooperate with research and other nonprofit academically-oriented associations in support of Study Center objectives. Such organizations would include the Association of Former Intelligence Officers, the Veterans of OSS (Office of Strategic Services), the Military Studies Section of the International Studies Association, the National Military Intelligence Association, the Hoover Library and Institution, American Historical Association, Organization of American Historians, American Political Science Association and the military history associations.

- Assist organizations in the preparation of educational materials on intelligence and national decision-making through bibliographic and other advice.

- Encourage other major national membership organizations to expand their consideration of national policy questions relating to intelligence.

#### Projects Relating to the Media:

- Establish a series of national prizes for the best writings

on intelligence and national decision-making in a democracy.

- Award prizes or merit citations for media coverage in magazines.

- Award prizes or merit citations for coverage in electronic media;

- Award prizes or merit citations for written materials, including speeches or lectures prepared for presentation to public affairs or educational organizations and articles prepared for learned journals.

- Award prizes or merit citations for worthy full-length books on intelligence.

Washington is a center of research for scholars at all levels, ranging from high school students to professors from the nation's universities. It is the home of the Library of Congress, the National Archives, the Smithsonian Institution and the professional associations of historians, political scientists, and social studies teachers. Many universities and "think tanks" are represented in Washington. Many meetings of national organizations of scholars meet in Washington every few years. In addition, the Washington community includes a significant group of retired military and civilian officials who will be invited to participate in the work of the Center. For these and many other reasons, Washington is a logical site for the Study Center on intelligence.

Establishment of the National Intelligence Study Center in the nation's capital is a step taken in hopes it will raise the level of sophistication in thinking about the intellectual and government process called intelligence on which our national security depends so much.

Serving as President of the National Intelligence Study Center is Ray S. Cline, Executive Director of the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies and author of several books on National Security matters. Maj. Gen. J. Milnor Roberts, USA (Ret.); Executive Director, ROA, is National Vice President; Martin G. Cramer, Foreign Service Officer presently on assignment to the United States Information Agency, Executive Director; Roger Abbott, former professor of Political Science at American University, Secretary; and Marjorie Cline, Research Associate, Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies, Treasurer.

Directors include Norman R. Ashton, Jules Davids, John W. Dixon, William McH. Franklin, and Merrill F. Hartshorn.

For additional information write: National Intelligence Study Center, Post Office Box 34682, Washington, D.C. 20034.